OBTC 2016 at Walsh University
June 8th – 11th, 2016

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

In your abstract, please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words), and three to four keywords. If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.

Group Grades: Creating a classroom context to unite

Experience how group grading can unite, instead of tear apart, classroom groups. This session offers 3 mini-cases, 2 mini-exercises, 1 role play, a storytelling and cross-cultural version of the "Team from Hell" activity, a 14-item group-grading-strategy checklist, and Twenty Tips for using group grading in your classes, including a template for out-of-class service learning projects as a key feature of group grading. Participants will share their own experiences, and they will perform both the Yes/No and the Mountain Trek activities. A fun role-play will bring to life the Team from Hell, the Team from Heaven, and the Team from Earth. Keywords: group grading; group skills, course design, fairness

2) Format
   _X_ Activity or exercise
   __ Roundtable discussion (60 minute only)
   __ General discussion session

2a) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for
   __ A traditional classroom
   __ An online class
   _X_ Either

2b) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for
   __ Undergraduate students
   __ Graduate students
   _X_ Either

3) Time Requested:
   __ 30 Minutes

<u>__</u> 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
<u>X</u> 90 Minutes

4) Planning Details:

Each room contains a white board with markers, computer (PC) with DVD capability and computer projector. Does your session require any other equipment?

No - - We can use a whiteboard instead of flip charts.

5) Teaching Implications:

What is the contribution of your session to management pedagogy/andragogy? Specifically, please include your learning objectives, and describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Also, include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.

<u>Objectives:</u>
1. Participants will identify key "fairness" problems with grading group projects, based on personal experiences as well as the provided cases. Problem areas include "free-riders," individual accountability, individual fairness, and cross-cultural issues.
2. Participants will practice 2 brief exercises designed to help students gain important group-management skills: How/when to say yes/no, and how/when to be helpful.
3. Participants will receive a template for out-of-class service-learning projects designed specifically for team-building for classroom groups.
4. Participants will identify at least 3 ways in which "heterarchy" and "Ensemble Leadership" can address fairness issues in student groups, and offer an alternative model for team leadership.
5. Participants will role play positive and negative group behaviors, to break the norms of "taboo topics" relating to individual performance within a group, in a constructive and light-hearted way.

<u>Topics:</u> Group Dynamics, Teambuilding, Leadership, Motivation, Reward Systems, Goal-setting, Measuring Objectives, Group Cohesion and Satisfaction, Attitudes, Group Decision Making, Power and Politics, Diversity and Cross-Cultural Group Management, Communication, Job Design, and many more.

<u>Fit within Management and Pedagogy</u>: This topic considers specifics of group grading schemes as potentially unfair and unethical classroom practices. How can professors avoid these pitfalls of group grading? When done using our own management principles of team self-management, individual accountability, and group rewards, group grading can foster high performance, high learning, and high group cohesiveness. Alternative leadership models such as "Ensemble Leadership," as well as a variety of in- and out-of-class group activities, can create effective teams within a single semester.

6) Session Description and Plan:

What will you actually do in this session? If appropriate, please include a timeline estimating the activities will you facilitate: how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Please remember that reviewers will be evaluating how well the time request matches the activities you'd like to do, and the extent you can reasonably accomplish the session's goals. Reviewers will also be looking for how you are engaging the participants in the session.

TOTAL TIME: 90 min   (87 min plus 3 min slack time)
(This interactive proposal includes 3 mini-cases, 2 mini-exercises, 1 role-play, and 4 Handouts.)
1. (5 min) Opening Case
Excerpts from a student account of a group project at NMSU, 2015, in an auditorium class of 150 students:

> The group I was in was composed of myself, two other women, and three men. One of the men rarely showed up to class. …Despite the fact that there are students who are evidently putting no effort into the class, if they are on the roster, you still have to treat them like a peer or a co-worker. In the real world, this person would be fired. The two other women in my group happened to be friends and spent the entirety of the class giggling. In fact, one of the women started dating one of the men in our group. We would have the entire 50 minute class period three times a week to complete our group work and divvy up the work. Instead, the class would consist of my two group members holding hands and kissing, the other girl on her phone, the one guy not even present, which just left me and one other group member to do all of the work…. The other man and I spoke on two different occasions to our TAs (as we were not to go to the professor for anything the TA could handle) who said that when grading our group work, they would take a look at it.…You can clearly tell from our group work that the majority of the work was written in two people's penmanship as opposed to six. However, we never heard anything of it again. …The other man and I decided to stop spending our energy trying to do the impossible. We figured we would just do our work together and help each other out…. the final exam approached. As was expected, only myself and [X][1] (the only group member who helped) showed up. We worked on our final exam for the two hours, when the professor walked by and said "where is the rest of your group?" When we explained to her that they did not show up and had not been very helpful during most of our projects, the professor said she would deal with it. However, nothing came of it as far as I know. The man from the "couple" in our group ended up….with a B in the class, which was what he was expecting. He received the same grade on the final exam as [X] and I, despite the fact that he wasn't even there and the professor knew this. I can only assume that the professor did not bother to change their grades, despite the fact that she saw only the two of us working on the final.

Survey data on student group work confirms that about a third of students have similar bad experiences:

> Overall, data from the survey showed that students found group work to provide an 'average' experience (m = 3.06, standard deviation (SD) = 1.268), with 44% responding that they had 'good' or 'excellent' group work experiences (4 and 5 on the Likert scale) and almost a third (32%) responded that they had 'poor' or 'very poor' group work experiences (1 and 2 on the Likert scale). These results were the same across disciplines.

> David Hall and Simone Buzwell, "The Problem of Free-Riding in Group Projects: Looking beyond Social Loafing as Reason for Non-Contribution," *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 2012, 1469787412467123.

2. (5 min) What is wrong with this picture? We will use large-group Q&A to write answers to this question on flip charts or whiteboards. We will have 2-3 persons writing down the comments.

3. (2 min) Why use groups in the classroom? (2 minutes of answers)
(learn group skills, get broader range of ideas, easier to grade when large numbers of students, a necessary skill for citizens of a democracy, etc.)

4. (10 min) What are the Cross-Cultural Concerns with Groups?
  Autoethnographies of 3 students (2 min each) (Bahareh, Ruoquing, Yanni)
  The Team from Earth (**2 min mini-case example**)
  The Sink-or-Swim Mini-case (Yanni) **(2 min mini-case example**)

5. (10 min)
Ensemble Leadership for Groups: An Indigenous, Tribal, and Arts-Based model of Leadership
  Heterarchy instead of hierarchy
  Great Group instead of Great Man
  Fluid Morphing instead of dispersed or distributed leader roles
  Relationships included in ROI as most important outcome
  Group vs Individual, Leadership vs Followership, are seen as false dualisms
(Handout: Summary of Ensemble Leadership as Collective, Relational Leadership for Groups)

6. (15 min) Student training in group management skills:
  (5 min) Practice exercise: Saying YES and saying NO.
  (5 min) Practice exercise: Climbing the Hill: Helping vs. dependency-inducing behavior
  (5 min) debrief the exercises and introduce Team from Hell/Team from Earth
  Storytelling and the "Team from Hell" exercise
  (Handout: Storytelling Team from Hell Exercise and sample student worksheets)
   Taboo topics;
   Setting Expectations and Group Norms;
    Group Goals/Objectives & Strategies;

From the Team members themselves, based on their stories
Designed to provide rewards/punishments, but especially rewards
Designed to proactively prevent "Team from Hell" behaviors
Long-term or short-term?

7. (10 min) Professor Preparation for Group Assignments
(**Handout: Basic Checklist for Groups in the Classroom**; and suggested formats used successfully)

Forced group work or are alternatives available?
Nature of the topic: any relevance to group dynamics? Any group benefits?
Enforcing basic guidelines: excessive absences, unforeseen circumstances, etc.
Class structure/reward system and the Folly of Rewarding A while Hoping for B.
Context: one-shot or multiple experiences? Feedback opportunities mid-way?
Assigned to enforced groups, or voluntarily formed groups?

Assigned groups based on task content, on skill of participant, or affinity
Group Grades based on multiple types of activities

Group Exams
Group Service or other out-of-class Activity
Fun Team Competitions for Bonus Points, non-course content
Scavenger Hunts
Team Performance: Dance, Skit, Art-Based Activity

(Handout: Twenty Tips for Using Group Projects and Group Grading)

8. (20 min) Role Playing: (Hank and Elmira)

The Team from Hell, The team from Heaven, and the Team from Earth

9. (10 min) Success Stories, Student Endorsements of Groups, and Concluding Wrap-Up

7) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *United in Service*?

As our cases demonstrate, group projects with group grades can result in psychologically stressful situations for students who experience the process as unfair. This causes hard feelings and divisiveness. Instead, when used properly, the authors have found that successful group experiences add to learning, add to friendships, add to classroom performance, and contribute to skills students know will help them in the workplace and in life. We believe it is vitally important, and the best service we can offer our students in our overly-competitive culture in the US, to experience the unity and joy of group work at its best. Further, a key part of our recommended strategies for team-building is a group service-learning project.

8) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

Have you presented the work in this proposal before? If so, how will it be different? Is this proposal under current review somewhere else? If so, please explain. How will your proposal be different for the OBTC conference?

Only one small portion of this session has been presented previously at OBTC, the Team from Hell exercise. However, it is only mentioned for about 1 minute with a handout provided. The "Ensemble Leadership" concept will appear in a forthcoming article in a special issue of the journal Leadership on Indigenous Leadership. The article does not at all address applying these concepts to classroom groups. Also, this concept is discussed for only 10 minutes of the 90 minute presentation. The rest is new material.